

BENEFITS TO RURAL MISSOURI RESIDENTS HIGHLIGHTED AT WATER AND WASTE WATER CONFERENCE

The 14th annual Missouri Water and Wastewater Conference organized by USDA Rural Development was held in Columbia, Missouri, on November 3, 2010 for over 145 consulting engineers, regional planning commissions, community planners, grant writers and other consultants from across the state. Many local, state and federal officials were also in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss water and sewer opportunities for residents and communities in rural Missouri. The programs are delivered through a partnership of federal, state, and local partners working together to assist rural areas.

Anita J. (Janie) Dunning, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development, said, "The success of providing water and sewer infrastructure for rural citizens is dependent upon partnering with professional engineers, planners, consultants, and other funding sources. This conference highlighted technical assistance and funding options to rural areas of Missouri for environmentally safe water and waste water systems. The conference exemplified the Rural Development mission – *"committed to the future of rural communities."* Dunning also congratulated all those in attendance for their contribution to making fiscal year 2010 a banner year with a record number of people served and dollars invested in water and waste water infrastructure.

The partners participating in the conference included representatives from the Missouri Department of Economic Development, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Missouri Rural Water Association (MRWA), Midwest Assistance Program (MAP), various Managers and Engineers of Rural Water Districts, and staff of Missouri USDA Rural Development.

Clark Thomas, Director of the Business and Community Programs for Missouri USDA Rural Development, discussed some of Rural Development's policies and funding for fiscal year 2010. He stated, "The Missouri Water & Wastewater Review Committee diligently works together to ensure all available funding sources in Missouri are utilized to assist as many communities as possible. The American Revitalization and Recovery Act (ARRA) provided additional funds through FY 2010 as part of a nationwide economic stimulus package. Communities with water and waste water infrastructure needs are encouraged to evaluate their needs and make application for these funding options."

Thomas applauded the teamwork of the engineers, the regional planning commissions, the grant writers, and others resulting in deserving rural residents and communities reaching the goal of having essential water and waste water systems through an investment of almost \$90 million in 79 loans and grants.



Pictured left to right: Clark Thomas, Director of Business & Community Programs for Missouri USDA Rural Development; Janie Dunning, Missouri State Director for USDA Rural Development; and Bruce Wylie, President and CEO of American Council of Engineering Companies of Missouri.

Bruce Wylie, President and CEO of American Council of Engineering Companies of Missouri, was recognized and appreciation extended by Thomas for allowing credit hours for this conference towards the professional development hours (PDH) requirements of engineers.

Ted Forester, P.E., Missouri USDA Rural Development Engineer, gave an update on engineering issues regarding Rural Development water and wastewater programs. Dennis Sievers, PhD, P.E., also a Missouri USDA Rural Development Engineer, presented an informative presentation on decentralized wastewater treatment.

Several other key partners in helping rural communities with water and sewer projects were in attendance and made presentations including: John Hoagland, Executive Director for Missouri Rural Water Association (MRWA); Dennis Siders, Regional Director for Midwest Assistance Program, Traci Newberry, Project Coordinator for Missouri Department of Natural Resources; and Liz Roberts, Incentives Specialist with the Department of Economic Development on the workings of and funding status of the Missouri Water and Waste Water Review Committee.

Anyone seeking more information about the Water and Waste programs or any other USDA Rural Development programs may visit the Homepage at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/mo>.

“Committed to the future of rural communities.”

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